

# Maastricht University Graduate Surveys 2012

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# Maastricht University graduate surveys 2012

## ROA Fact Sheet

ROA-F-2012/3

Researchcentrum voor Onderwijs en Arbeidsmarkt | ROA  
*Research Centre For Education and the Labour Market | ROA*

## Maastricht University graduate surveys 2012

How successful is Maastricht University in preparing its students for the labour market? What career paths are Maastricht University alumni taking in the short and medium term, and how do they look back on their time in Maastricht? This fact sheet presents the most important results of a 2012 survey amongst three cohorts of Maastricht University alumni. The first cohort graduated in the academic year 2009-2010 (these respondents were interviewed in 2011-2012), the second cohort graduated in the academic year 2005-2006 (six years prior to the 2012 survey), the third cohort graduated in the academic year 2000-2001 (11 years prior to the 2012 survey).<sup>1,2</sup>

### Position in the labour market

Six to eleven years after graduation, around 95% of the Maastricht University alumni are in paid work. Of those not involved in paid work, a small percentage was at the moment of the survey searching for work and, all disciplines taken together, only 2% of graduates of 2005-2006 and 2% of graduates of 2000-2001 reported to be out of the labour force. Important reasons for inactivity include participating in further education or to be taking care of children or relatives. Focussing on those currently searching for work, Table 1 gives a more detailed overview of graduates' unemployment rates by cohort and faculty. On average, 8% of alumni of the 2009-2010 cohort, 3% of the 2005-2006 cohort and 2% of the 2000-2001 cohort are unemployed.<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that a substantial part of this unemployment rate is frictional (i.e. the time-period between two jobs). Therefore, involuntary unemployment does not seem to be a problem amongst Maastricht University graduates. A possible exception to this conclusion are Arts and Social Sciences graduates five years after graduation. Graduates from this faculty also appear to have the most trouble making the transition to the labour market, as the

relatively high unemployment rate of the youngest cohort (2009-2010) suggests. Considering the above figures, labour market participation is very high for all three cohorts of Maastricht University graduates.

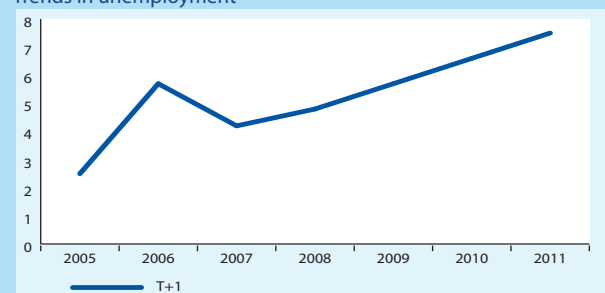
**Table 1**  
Unemployment<sup>1</sup>

	% unemployed		
	2009-2010	2005-2006	2000-2001
Business and Economics	5	2	1
Health, Medicine and Life Sciences	3	2	1
Arts and Social Sciences	24	10	x
Psychology and Neuroscience	11	4	4
Law	9	0	6
Maastricht University	8	3	2

1 = too little information about the Faculty of Humanities and Sciences

x = too few cases

**Figure 1**  
Trends in unemployment<sup>1</sup>



1 = the 2010 data are interpolated linearly (T+1)

### Trends in unemployment

How has the economic crisis affected labour market opportunities of Maastricht University graduates since 2008? To get some insight into the possible answers to this question, we analyse briefly the average unemployment rate of Maastricht University graduates, as reported in surveys that were held each year between 2005 and 2011. For all seven years that these surveys were conducted, unemployment information for the three cohorts is available. For the two cohorts that are 6, respectively, 11 years on the labour market, no visible trend in unemployment rates can be observed. Particularly when comparing within cohorts over time, unemployment rates fluctuate trendless. In other words, the current economic crisis seems not to have an influence on the unemployment rate of Maastricht University alumni 6 to 11 years into their labour market career. However, a notable increase in unemployment rates can be observed when comparing those students who graduated one year prior to each survey (see Figure 1). Although these figures need to be interpreted carefully, this suggests that Maastricht University graduates increasingly face difficulties when making the transition to the labour market. In Appendix

1. Of the 2009-2010 cohort, 1777 respondents were approached, of whom 29% responded, and 25% filled in a complete form. For the 2005-2006 cohort, of the 2390 alumni we approached, 2264 could be reached. Of these 37% participated in the survey, and 31% filled out a complete form. Of the alumni from the 2000-2001 cohort, of the 1327 alumni we approached, 1270 could be reached. Of these alumni, 34% responded, with 28% completing the survey.
2. The reader should keep in mind that the mix of studies offered by Maastricht University the respondents graduated from might vary between the three cohorts. In particular, the youngest cohort consists of graduates from Master programmes (1-2 years) whereas the two older cohorts consist of graduates from 4-year programmes (and in the case of the Medical study 6 years).
3. The unemployment rate might also vary within faculties. In case of the faculty Health, Medicine and Life Science the unemployment rate of Medical alumni is 0% for the two younger cohorts, whereas for Health and Life Science alumni the unemployment rate is between 2% and 3%.

A, these figures are further broken down by the various faculties.

### Job characteristics

The match between graduates' education and the requirements of their job has important implications for the extent to which graduates can use their knowledge and skills. The quality of the education-job match is therefore positively related to job satisfaction, career opportunities and wages. Table 2a presents the proportion of Maastricht University graduates with a good horizontal education-job match, that is, the percentage of alumni who work in jobs for which their own or a related field of study is required.

**Table 2a**  
Horizontal match<sup>1</sup>

	% working in own or related field of study		
	2009-2010	2005-2006	2000-2001
Business and Economics	77	84	77
Health, Medicine and Life Sciences	87	84	90
Arts and Social Sciences	57	50	x
Psychology and Neuroscience	89	80	80
Law	77	85	82
<b>Maastricht University</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>82</b>

<sup>1</sup> = too little information about the Faculty of Humanities and Sciences

x: too few cases

The results are positive, with 81% of alumni from the 2005-2006 cohort, and 82% of the alumni from the 2000-2001 cohort working in a good horizontal match. Also positive is that Maastricht University alumni appear to find jobs in their own field of study relatively fast: 80% of the alumni from the 2009-2010 cohort that were employed, were working in a job that fit their field of education. But considerable differences can be observed between graduates from the various faculties. Graduates from the Faculty of Health, Medical and Life Sciences have above average figures for all three cohorts. However, an important side mark is that within this faculty, a strong distinction can be seen between the study of medicine and the studies of Health and Life sciences. Whereas by nature of their very specific education, Medical graduates are very well matched (between 92% for the youngest cohort and 100% for the two older cohorts), the figures are clearly lower for the graduates of Health and Life Science studies (2009-2010: 83%; 2005-2006: 76%). Also below average are the figures for the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences where 50% (2005-2006 cohort) to 57% (cohort 2009-2010) report a horizontal match. Moreover, 36% of the mismatched graduates from this faculty say that they were not able to find a job related to their field of study.<sup>4</sup> This is well above the Maastricht University average

4. Other reasons for working outside the own domain are changes in interest or for instance the possibility to earn a higher salary.

of 23%, and only superseded by graduates from the Faculty of Psychology and Neuroscience. Of the horizontally mismatched students from this faculty, 45% reported that they could not find a job in their field of study.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to the horizontal match, the vertical match (i.e. whether graduates are working in a job for which a university degree is required) is an important indicator of the quality of the education-job match. Table 2b shows that 86% of the graduates from the 2009-2010 cohort, 85% of the respondents who graduated in 2005-2006 and 89% of the respondents who graduated in 2000-2001 had an excellent vertical match between education and work at the time of the survey. There is, however, substantial variation between disciplines.<sup>5</sup> Psychology and Neuroscience, as well as Law graduates report excellent vertical matching rates, of about 90%. Possible exception are law school alumni from the youngest cohort, of whom only 81% are employed in a university-level job. These outcomes are highly correlated with degree specificity as well as labour market conditions in the particular field. In all disciplines and for both cohorts, the percentage of graduates with an excellent vertical match increased markedly between the first and the current job.

**Table 2b**  
Vertical match<sup>1</sup>

	% working at university level or higher first job			% working at university level or higher current job		
	2009-2010	2005-2006	2000-2001	2009-2010	2005-2006	2000-2001
Business and Economics	*	77	79	87	85	88
Health, Medicine and Life Sciences	*	71	80	86	81	90
Arts and Social Sciences	*	65	x	84	85	x
Psychology and Neuroscience	*	65	60	94	91	88
Law	*	70	87	81	94	94
<b>Maastricht University</b>	<b>*</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>89</b>

<sup>1</sup> = too little information about the Faculty of Humanities and Sciences

\* = For the cohort 2009-2010 (interviewed 1,5 year after graduation) no information on the first job is available.

x = too few cases

### Income and working hours

At the time of the survey, the median gross income of Maastricht University alumni of 2005-2006 is €3600 per month, and this rises to €4500 for the cohort of 2000-2001 alumni (see Table 3). These numbers match the results of previous surveys. Also, income patterns across disciplines seem to remain more or less stable: Health, Medicine and

5. For the Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences a strong difference is again visible between the Medical Study (100% of the graduates are matched perfectly with respect to this indicator) and Health and Life Sciences. Graduates of the latter studies are matched well in 74% (2009-2010), 71% (2005-2006) and 85% (2000-2001) of the cases.

Life Sciences alumni, Arts and Social Sciences alumni and Psychology and Neuroscience alumni have the lowest median income. Even after taking account of the relatively low number of working hours per week of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences alumni (especially for the 2000-2001 cohort) substantial differences in salaries remain.<sup>6</sup>

When starting on the labour market, SBE alumni earn the highest salaries, with a median gross income of around €2800 per month. In contrast, graduates from the Arts and Social Sciences faculty earn a gross monthly median income of €1800. With a median gross income of €4400 per month, SBE alumni earn most amongst the 2005-2006 cohort and after five further years in the labour market, they keep their top position with €5500. Maastricht University graduates from the two top income disciplines (Business and Economics and Law) report regular working hours per week between 36 and 40. It is worth mentioning that these figures present contractual working hours excluding overtime. Actual working hours can deviate from these figures.

**Table 3**  
Income and working hours<sup>1</sup>

	gross income per month (median)			regular working hours per week		
	2009- 2010	2005- 2006	2000- 2001	2009- 2010	2005- 2006	2000- 2001
Business and Economics	2.846	4.400	5.500	40.0	40.0	40.0
Health, Medicine and Life Sciences	2.661	3.478	4.000	38.0	36.0	32.0
Arts and Social Sciences	1.800	3.044	x	40.0	36.0	x
Psychology and Neuroscience	2.093	3.000	3.800	36.0	36.0	36.0
Law	2.393	3.625	4.500	40.0	40.0	38.0
<b>Maastricht University</b>	<b>2.528</b>	<b>3.600</b>	<b>4.500</b>	<b>40.0</b>	<b>40.0</b>	<b>36.0</b>

<sup>1</sup> = too little information about the Faculty of Humanities and Sciences

x = too few cases

### Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction of Maastricht University graduates is generally high. Of the 2009-2010 cohort, 80% of all employed alumni are satisfied with their jobs. Also, amongst the 2005-2006 cohort, 79% of alumni are satisfied with their jobs, and 84% of alumni are satisfied with their jobs amongst the 2000-2001 cohort. The majority of Maastricht University alumni (73% of the 2009-2010 cohort, 70% of the 2005-2006 cohort and 65% of the 2000-2001 cohort) also find that their current job offers good career opportunities (see Table 4).

6. The relative low median income is thereby strongly influenced by the income generated by alumni from Health and Life Sciences studies. Medical graduates have a) a higher starting salary and b) are the best paid alumni 11 years after graduation with a median income of Euro 6.000. Due to the structure of their career paths, Medical alumni are also the group which displays the biggest income growth between six and eleven years after graduation.

**Table 4**  
Job satisfaction, career opportunities<sup>1</sup>

	% satisfied with job			job offers good career opportunities		
	2009- 2010	2005- 2006	2000- 2001	2009- 2010	2005- 2006	2000- 2001
Business and Economics	84	79	81	77	77	65
Health, Medicine and Life Sciences	80	84	85	77	69	66
Arts and Social Sciences	60	66	x	43	56	x
Psychology and Neuroscience	79	70	87	74	48	70
Law	73	78	84	73	69	65
<b>Maastricht University</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>65</b>

<sup>1</sup> = too little information about the Faculty of Humanities and Sciences

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The question that provides information about career opportunities for the cohort 2009-2010 differs slightly from the question asked to respondents from the cohorts 2005-2006 and 2000-2001. Results have been made comparable.

### International orientation of Maastricht University and its graduates

The international orientation of Maastricht University and the fact that English is the main language of instruction in many study programs, appears to be attracting an increasing number of international students for all faculties. Table 5a shows the percentage of Maastricht University alumni of the various cohorts who are currently working inside and outside the Netherlands, split by faculty. For Maastricht University as a whole, 20% of the alumni of the 2005-2006 cohort are working in European countries other than the Netherlands, and 3% are working outside of Europe. Of the youngest cohort, almost one-third has found employment outside the Netherlands, also mostly in European countries. These numbers include foreign students who returned to their home country after graduation.

Considerable variation exists between the faculties.<sup>7</sup> Graduates from the School of Business and Economics are particularly internationally active, closely followed by those of the Faculty of Psychology and Neurosciences. But alumni from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences stand out most notably. Of the 2005-2006 cohort, 39% of the students were working in countries other than the Netherlands, which was relatively high. Of the youngest cohort however, no less than 71% of the alumni from this faculty were working abroad. These figures thus indicate that for alumni from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, international labour markets are now more important than the Dutch labour market. The figures also show that although there exist large differences between faculties in the extent to which graduates pursue an international career, the share of internationally active

7. In case of the Law Faculty, considerable variation exists also within the Faculty between graduates of Dutch Law (Dutch labour market oriented) and graduates of International Law (European labour market oriented).

graduates has increased for all but one faculty between 2001 and 2011.

Asked to what extent the education received at Maastricht University prepared them for the international labour market, 51% of the 2005-2006 cohort and 42% of the 2000-2001 cohort responded that they felt prepared to a high or very high extent. Here too, variation exists between the faculties. Table 5b illustrates the relationship between feeling prepared to work abroad and actually working abroad. According to this figure, the School of Business and Economics is the most internationally oriented, with 79% of 2005-2006 graduates feeling prepared for the international labour market and 39% actually working outside the Netherlands.

It is noteworthy that most faculties seem to improve the extent to which they prepare students for an international career. Compared to the 2000-2001 cohort alumni from the 2005-2006 cohort more often feel well prepared for the international labour market.

**Table 5a**  
Percentage currently working abroad<sup>1</sup>

	2009-2010			2005-2006			2000-2001		
	NL	EU	Other	NL	EU	Other	NL	EU	Other
Business and Economics	52	46	2	61	34	5	76	21	3
Health, Medicine and Life Sciences	90	9	1	95	3	2	94	2	4
Arts and Social Sciences	29	71	0	61	34	5	x	x	x
Psychology and Neuroscience	69	31	0	80	15	4	96	4	0
Law	81	15	4	91	8	2	94	2	5
<b>Maastricht University</b>	67	30	3	76	20	3	88	9	3

<sup>1</sup> = too little information about the Faculty of Humanities and Sciences

x = too few cases

**Table 5b**  
Percentage of alumni feeling well prepared for international labour market and percentage working abroad<sup>1</sup>

	2009-2010		2005-2006		2000-2001	
	well prepared	working abroad	well prepared	working abroad	well prepared	working abroad
Business and Economics	*	48	79	39	75	24
Health, Medicine and Life Sciences	*	10	29	5	27	6
Arts and Social Sciences	*	71	36	39	x	x
Psychology and Neuroscience	*	31	27	20	42	4
Law	*	19	36	9	31	6
<b>Maastricht University</b>	*	33	51	24	42	12

<sup>1</sup> = too little information about the Faculty of Humanities and Sciences

\* = For the cohort 2009-2010 (interviewed 1,5 year after graduation) no information is available.

x = too few cases

### Satisfaction with study at Maastricht University

Finally, alumni were asked to reflect on their time at Maastricht University and assess which choices they would make in retrospect. In the 2009-2010 cohort, 80% of the alumni would again choose the exact same study at Maastricht University. For the cohorts that graduated in the academic years 2005-2006 and 2000-2001, these figures were 72% and 75%, respectively. Table 6 presents the survey results for the three cohorts by faculty.<sup>8</sup>

**Table 6**  
Percentage of alumni who would again choose to study at Maastricht University<sup>1</sup>

	2009-2010	2005-2006	2000-2001
Business and Economics	84	78	81
Health, Medicine and Life Sciences	78	67	72
Arts and Social Sciences	69	62	79
Psychology and Neuroscience	77	68	62
Law	85	72	79
<b>Maastricht University</b>	80	72	75

<sup>1</sup> = too little information about the Faculty of Humanities and Sciences

In line with these findings, 77% of the respondents report that their study at Maastricht University is still (very) useful for their current job. These results are consistent across faculties and cohorts.

Even five and ten years after graduation, the bond between Maastricht University and its alumni is still strong. As part of the survey, alumni were asked whether Maastricht University could contact them to ask them to give a lecture or a presentation, to act as contact person in their company should internships become available there, or to act as a 'mentor' for current students. Six out of ten respondents indicated that they would like to become more involved in at least one of these Maastricht University alumni networks.

8. Within the Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences, graduates of the Medical studies are significantly more satisfied with their study choice in retrospect. 60%-65% of the graduates of Health and Life Science would again choose the same study at Maastricht University compared to 80%-90% of the Medical graduates.

## Appendix A

**Table 7**  
Trends in unemployment<sup>1</sup>

	2005 T+1 2003-2004	2006 T+1 2004-2005	2007 T+1 2005-2006	2008 T+1 2006-2007	2009 T+1 2007-2008	2010 <sup>2</sup> T+1 2008-2009	2011 T+1 2009-2010
Business and Economics	2,8	2,7	2,3	4,2	5,7	5,3	4,9
Health and Life Sciences	1,1	6,1	5,3	4,2	0,0	2,2	4,4
Medicine	0,0	0,0	2,1	2,8	0,0	0,0	0,0
Arts and Social Sciences	8,3	25,0	11,1	13,8	18,5	21,2	23,9
Psychology and Neuroscience	7,5	14,9	8,1	0,0	6,1	8,75	11,4
Law	3,0	7,0	2,5	5,8	6,0	7,4	8,8
<b>Maastricht University</b>	<b>2,5</b>	<b>5,7</b>	<b>4,2</b>	<b>4,8</b>	<b>5,7</b>	<b>6,6</b>	<b>7,5</b>
	2006 T+5 1999-2000	2007 T+5 2000-2001	2008 T+5 2001-2002	2009 T+5 2002-2003	2010 T+5 2003-2004	2011 T+5 2004-2005	2012 T+5 2005-2006
Business and Economics	4,5	0,7	0,5	3,2	2,2	5,4	1,9
Health and Life Sciences	0,6	2,0	2,1	3,4	2,4	3,2	3,0
Medicine	0,0	1,4	1,3	0,0	0,0	1,5	0,0
Arts and Social Sciences	-	-	-	-	-	3,8	10,1
Psychology and Neuroscience	3,7	0,0	5,7	1,9	7,0	10,3	4,2
Law	0,0	1,0	0,0	1,2	4,3	3,8	0,0
<b>Maastricht University</b>	<b>2,4</b>	<b>1,1</b>	<b>1,3</b>	<b>2,3</b>	<b>2,5</b>	<b>4,4</b>	<b>2,7</b>
	2006 T+10 1994-1995	2007 T+10 1995-1996	2008 T+10 1996-1997	2009 T+10 1997-1998	2010 T+10 1998-1999	2011 T+10 1999-2000	2012 T+10 2000-2001
Business and Economics	0,8	1,5	0,9	0,0	3,0	2,8	0,9
Health and Life Sciences	2,4	2,0	2,2	0,9	0,8	1,8	0,9
Medicine	0,0	1,9	2,3	0,0	0,0	2,6	1,8
Arts and Social Sciences	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Psychology and Neuroscience	-	-	-	0,0	0,0	0,0	3,8
Law	4,6	2,4	1,2	0,0	1,5	0,0	6,1
<b>Maastricht University</b>	<b>2,0</b>	<b>2,0</b>	<b>2,0</b>	<b>0,3</b>	<b>1,7</b>	<b>2,0</b>	<b>2,0</b>

<sup>1</sup> = too little information about the Faculty of Humanities and Sciences

<sup>2</sup> = the 2010 data are interpolated linearly (T+1)

x = too few cases

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